

Green Mountain Book Award

Handbook

2011-2012



**Compiled by
the Green Mountain Book Award Committee**

State of Vermont
Department of Libraries
109 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05609-0601
<http://libraries.vermont.gov/libraries/gmba>

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INTRODUCTION

What is the Green Mountain Book Award?

The Green Mountain Book Award is the student-selected award for Vermonters in grades 9-12. In 2005 it joined the other two Vermont child-selected book awards, the Red Clover Award, a picture book award for children in Kindergarten-grade 4, and the Dorothy Canfield Fisher Award, a book award for students in grades 4-8.

How did the award start?

Librarians had been talking about the possibility of such an award for several years, but it was Marsha Middleton, the librarian at North Country Union High School in Newport, Vermont and Sybil McShane, the Vermont State Librarian, who made it a reality. Marsha had both the desire to start a young adult award and the knowledge of high school kids and their reading, and Sybil had a strong interest in having the Department of Libraries better serve the teenagers of Vermont. Both librarians are passionate about young adult literature and bringing the best to kids, so it was a natural partnership.

The Department of Libraries agreed to fund a pilot project, and a group of excited volunteers formed a committee in 2004. The Vermont Educational Media Association (now the Vermont School Library Association) contributed funding, and CAYAL, the Children's and Young Adult section of the Vermont Library Association, pledged support and recruited volunteers. Since then we have established criteria, written bylaws, conducted a logo contest and created materials. Now well-established throughout the state, the program is an important part of Vermont's literary landscape.

This year's committee consisted of: Dorianne Cedeno, Teacher, People's Academy, Morrisville; Rebecca Cook, Library Director, Poultney Public Library; Toni Eubanks, Library Director, Glover Public Library and Barton Public Library; Susan Hennessey, Librarian, Harwood Union High School, Duxbury; Kathy Johnson, freelance writer and editor, Cambridge; Jessica Langlois, Librarian, Proctor Junior/Senior High School; Hannah Peacock, Youth Services Librarian, Burnham Memorial Library, Colchester; Kat Redniss, Library Assistant - Young Adult and Youth Services, Brownell Library, Essex Junction; Margaret Woodruff, Youth Services Librarian, Charlotte Public Library; and Grace Greene, Youth Services Consultant, Department of Libraries, Liaison to Committee.

Mission statement

The goal of the award is to select a list of books of good literary quality that:

- Engages high school students.
- Represents a variety of genres, formats and viewpoints.
- May include books written both for young people and adults.
- Reflects the interests of high school students.

Criteria for choosing books

To be eligible for the Green Mountain Book Award list, a book must:

- Be available in paperback
- Have been published in the last 5 years (2006-2010 for the 2011-2012 list)
- Have received two favorable reviews in professionally recognized review sources (if possible)

In addition, there may be only one book by an author on any given list.

Timetable

Voting for the winner of the Green Mountain Book Award is held at the beginning of May. The committee recommends that in order to be eligible to vote, a student should read at least three books on the masterlist. The new list is available in March, and is made available to all school and public libraries at that time.

Book Sets

The Department of Libraries has multiple copies of each book on the masterlist, and will send them out on interlibrary loan. Please contact Linda Willis-Pendo at linda.willis-pendo@state.vt.us.

Materials available

There are bookmarks that list the nominees for the 2011-2012 award, spine labels and posters. If you would like any of these items, please call or email Grace Greene at the Department of Libraries: 828-6954; email: grace.greene@state.vt.us

Website

There is not a separate website for the Green Mountain Book Award, but materials are on the Department of Libraries website: <http://libraries.vermont.gov/libraries/gmba>.

Winners of the Green Mountain Book Award

2011 - Kristin Cashore. *Graceling*. Harcourt, 2008.

2010 - Neal Shusterman. *Unwind*. S & S, 2007.

2009 - Ellen Hopkins. *Crank*. SimonPulse, 2004.

2008 - John Green. *Looking for Alaska*. Dutton, 2005.

2007 - Jodi Picoult. *My Sister's Keeper*. S & S, 2004.

2006 - Angela Johnson. *The First Part Last*. S & S, 2003.

Green Mountain Book Award Master List 2011-2012

This is the seventh year of the Green Mountain Book Award, a reader's choice award for students in grades 9-12. Co-sponsored by the Vermont Department of Libraries and the Vermont School Library Association, this program is designed to introduce to high school students some excellent books for their pleasure reading.

These books, to be read during the 2011-2012 school year, comprise the master list for the award to be made in 2012. Voting forms will be made available to all Vermont schools and public libraries in the spring so that young adults can vote for their favorite book. The master list titles have been selected to satisfy the reading interests of teens in grades 9-12, and include both adult and young adult books. All books on the list were first published in 2006-2010 and are available in paperback.

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Wintergirls*. Speak, 2010. \$9.99. ISBN 978-0-1424-1557-3 (pap.); Viking, 2009. \$17.99. ISBN 978-0-6700-1110-0.

Eighteen-year-old Lia comes to terms with her best friend's death from anorexia as she struggles with the same disorder.

Barnes, John. *Tales of the Madman Underground*. Speak, 2011. \$9.99. ISBN 978-0-1424-1702-7 (pap.); Viking, 2009. \$18.99. ISBN 978-0-6700-6081-8.

In September 1973, as the school year begins in his depressed Ohio town, high-school senior Kurt Shoemaker determines to be "normal," despite his chaotic home life with his volatile, alcoholic mother and the deep loyalty and affection he has for his friends in the therapy group dubbed the Madman Underground.

Black, Holly & Cecil Castelluci, eds. *Geektastic: Stories from the Nerd Herd*. Little, Brown, 2010. \$8.99. ISBN 978-0-3160-0810-5 (pap.); Little, Brown, 2009. \$16.99. ISBN 978-0-3160-0809-9.

A collection of twenty-nine short stories about geeks.

Connolly, John. *The Book of Lost Things*. Washington Square Press, 2007. \$16.00. ISBN 978-0-7432-9890-2 (pap.).

High in his attic bedroom, twelve-year-old David mourns the death of his mother, with only the books on his shelf for company. But those books have begun to whisper to him in the darkness. Angry and alone, he takes refuge in his imagination and soon finds that reality and fantasy have begun to meld.

Doctorow, Cory. *Little Brother*. Tor Teen, 2010. \$9.99. ISBN 978-0-7653-2311-8 (pap.); Tor Teen, 2008. \$17.95. ISBN 978-0-7653-1985-2.

After being interrogated for days by the Department of Homeland Security in the aftermath of a major terrorist attack on San Francisco, California, seventeen-year-old Marcus, released into what is now a police state, decides to use his expertise in computer hacking to set things right.

- Going, K.L. ***King of the Screwups***. Graphia, 2010. \$7.99. ISBN 978-0-5473-3166-9 (pap.); Harcourt, 2009. \$17.00. ISBN 978-0-1520-6258-3.
After getting in trouble yet again, popular high school senior Liam, who never seems to live up to his wealthy father's expectations, is sent to live in a trailer park with his gay "glam-rocker" uncle.
- Kelly, Joe. ***I Kill Giants***. Illustrated by J.M. Ken Niimura. Image Comics, 2009. \$15.99. ISBN 978-1-6070-6092-5 (pap.).
Barbara Thorson, a girl battling monsters both real and imagined, kicks butt, takes names, and faces her greatest fear in this bittersweet, coming-of-age graphic novel.
- LaCour, Nina. ***Hold Still***. Speak, 2010. \$8.99. ISBN 978-0-1424-1694-5 (pap.); Dutton, 2009. \$17.99. ISBN 978-0-5254-2155-9.
As Caitlin struggles to cope with her best friend Ingrid's suicide, she turns inward and quiet, but finding Ingrid's hidden journal, a new classmate, and new projects help Caitlin find a way to reach out again.
- Ness, Patrick. ***The Knife of Never Letting Go***. Candlewick, 2009. \$9.99. ISBN 978-0-7636-4576-2 (pap.); Candlewick, 2008. \$18.99. ISBN 978-0-7636-3931-0.
Pursued by power-hungry Prentiss and mad minister Aaron, young Todd and Viola set out across New World searching for answers about his colony's true past and seeking a way to warn the ship bringing hopeful settlers from Old World.
- Patterson, James & Hal Friedman. ***Med Head: My Knock-down, Drag-out, Drugged-up Battle With My Brain***. Little, Brown, 2010. \$8.99. ISBN 978-0-3160-7617-3 (pap.).
Cory Friedman woke up one morning when he was five years old with the uncontrollable urge to twitch his neck. From that day forward his life became a hell of irrepressible tics and involuntary utterances, and Cory embarked on an excruciating journey from specialist to specialist to discover the cause of his disease. Soon it became unclear what tics were symptoms of his disease and what were side effects of countless combinations of drugs. The only certainty is that it kept getting worse. This is the true story of Cory and his family's decades-long battle for survival in the face of extraordinary difficulties and a maddening medical establishment.
- Pratchett, Terry. ***Nation***. HarperCollins, 2009. \$8.99. ISBN 978-0-0614-3303-0 (pap.); HarperCollins, 2008. \$17.99. ISBN 978-0-0614-3301-6.
After a devastating tsunami destroys all that they have ever known, Mau, an island boy, and Daphne, an aristocratic English girl, together with a small band of refugees, set about rebuilding their community and all the things that are important in their lives.
- Price, Catherine. ***101 Places Not to See Before You Die***. Harper Paperbacks, 2010. \$13.99. ISBN 978-0-0617-8776-8 (pap.).
A spirited, ingenious, tongue-in-cheek guide to some of the least appealing destinations and experiences in the world.

Sitomer, Alan Lawrence. *The Secret Story of Sonia Rodriguez*. Hyperion, 2010. \$8.99. ISBN 978-1-4231-3027-7 (pap.); Hyperion, 2008. \$17.99. ISBN 978-1-4231-1072-9.

Tenth-grader Sonia reveals secrets about her life and her Hispanic family as she studies hard to become the first Rodriguez to finish high school.

Stork, Francisco X. *Marcelo in the Real World*. Scholastic, 2011. \$8.99. ISBN 978-0-5450-5690-8 (pap.); Arthur A. Levine, 2009. \$17.99. ISBN 978-0-5450-5474-4.

Marcelo Sandoval, a seventeen-year-old boy on the high-functioning end of the autistic spectrum, faces new challenges, including romance and injustice, when he goes to work for his father in the mailroom of a corporate law firm.

Yancey, Rick. *Monstrumologist*. S & S, 2010. \$9.99. ISBN 978-1-4169-8449-8 (pap.); S & S, 2009. \$17.99. ISBN 978-1-4169-8448-1.

In 1888, twelve-year-old Will Henry chronicles his apprenticeship with Dr. Warthrop, a scientist who hunts and studies real-life monsters, as they discover and attempt to destroy a pod of Anthropophagi.

How to Apply for the Committee

The Green Mountain Book Award Committee consists of 10 volunteers and the Youth Services Consultant from the Vermont Department of Libraries. Committee members serve for three years, with an option of a second term. When there is an opening we advertise it through listservs and newsletters. We look for people who work with high school students and are passionate about books. School librarians, public librarians, teachers and community members are all urged to apply.

If you are interested in applying, please send a letter of interest, a resume and two reviews, one positive and one negative of any books of your choice to:

Grace Greene
Youth Services Consultant
Vermont Dept. of Libraries
109 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05609
grace.greene@state.vt.us

Guidelines for writing reviews

1. Book reviews should be between 200 and 1,000 words in length.
2. Each review should include a brief descriptive summary and an assessment of appeal to high school students.
3. Reviews should touch on the quality of the following features:

For Nonfiction:

- Authority and responsibility of the author
- Organization
- Writing style
- Illustrations
- Design
- Documentation of sources

For Poetry:

- Sound (rhyme, meter)
- Imagery
- Ideas

For Fiction:

- Plot
- Integration of background material
- Pacing
- Mood
- Characterization
- Point of view
- Setting
- Writing style
- Theme

Book Suggestion for the Green Mountain Book Award

Snail mail or email by October 1, 2011 to:

Grace Greene
Youth Services Consultant
Vermont Department of Libraries
109 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05609
grace.greene@state.vt.us

Name _____ Grade (if a student) _____

School or library _____

Title of Book _____

Author _____

Publisher and date of publication _____

To be eligible for consideration by the Green Mountain Book Award Committee for the 2012-2013 Masterlist, the book must have been first published in 2007-2011, and must be of interest to students in grades 9-12. Both adult and young adult books are eligible, and the authors can be of any nationality. The only other stipulation is that the book MUST currently be available in paperback in the US.

Do not include plot summaries, but please tell the committee why you think this book belongs on the GMBA list. Use as much space as you need.

This book should be on the list because:

WINTERGIRLS

by Laurie Halse Anderson



Genre: Realistic Fiction

Themes: Eating disorders, transformation, death

Author information: Laurie Halse Anderson is an author with a tremendous following and an uncanny ability to see into and capture the mind of a troubled young woman. Known primarily for her young adult fiction, she also writes novels for younger children and historical fiction. Her novels *Speak*, *Prom*, *Twisted*, and *Wintergirls* all appeared on the New York Times Bestseller List. *Catalyst*, *Prom*, and *Twisted* were all ALA Best Books for Young Adults. *Chains* and *Speak* were National Book Award Finalists and *Speak* was a Printz Honor Book.

Book summary: A “Wintergirl,” according to Laurie Halse Anderson, is a girl who is “emotionally frozen... stuck in a blizzard of self loathing, denial, and unhappiness.” Lia is exactly this. Eighteen, she has trapped herself in the starved body of a child. She cannot imagine food without the calories attached and the hideous consequences of consuming it. She cannot speak without censoring her words, removing every bit of need, every trace of emotion or empathy. Lia and Cassie had a pact: they would be wintergirls together, coaching each other through deprivation, only now Cassie is dead. Lia must decide for herself just how low she can force her numbers to drop: 500 calories...89 pounds...how little is enough? How long she can teeter on this line between life and death?

Booktalk: That night, Cassie called Lia thirty-three times. The next morning, Cassie was found dead in a motel room, alone. If only Lia had answered her phone. If only they hadn’t started to compete: thin, thinner, thinnest...but Lia cannot allow herself space for doubt. There is no room for anything, not an extra pound, an extra calorie, an extra word. Lia has to stay in control; she must keep everything and everyone out: food, family, friends, and help.

Curriculum tie-ins:

Health

Explore eating disorders and the psychology of self-deprivation

English

Explore narrative devices, including font changes, scored out text, and the unreliable narrator.

If you loved this, you'll like:

Asher, Jay. *Thirteen Reasons Why*. Razorbill, 2007.
Greenfield, Lauren. *Thin*. Chronicle, 2006.
Hopkins, Ellen. *Identical*. McElderry, 2008.
McCormick, Patricia. *Cut*. Front Street, 2000.
Vrettos, Adrienne Maria. *Skin*. McElderry, 2006.

Other books by the author:

Speak. FSG, 1999.

Catalyst. Viking, 2002.

Prom. Viking, 2005.

Twisted. Viking, 2007.

Chains. Atheneum, 2008.

Forge. Atheneum, 2010.

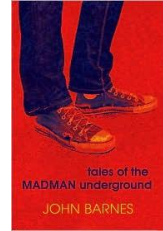
Additional resources:

www.madwomanintheforest.com

www.nationaleatingdisorders.org

TALES OF THE MADMAN UNDERGROUND

by John Barnes



Genre: Realistic fiction, could be considered historical (1973)

Themes: Friendships, therapy, alcoholism, coming of age, loyalties

Author information: John Barnes was born in 1957 and is mostly known as a science fiction writer. *Tales of the Madman Underground*, his first YA book, became a Printz Honor award book in 2010. His science fiction books have been nominated for The Hugo and Nebula awards. He holds a doctorate in theatre, and lives in Colorado.

Plot summary: Karl Shoemaker wants to be and act “normal” his senior year. This book follows the first six days as he tries to separate himself from those he believes make it hard for him to accomplish this goal.

Booktalk: Karl Shoemaker has only one wish: to be normal. After attending group therapy sessions for years at school, he is determined to get out of the group his senior year of high school and just be a regular guy. However, he has to deal both with the memory of his father, who at one time was the mayor of their town, and is still worshipped by many and, also, with his mother who is now a pot-smoking, addicted hippie who steals Karl’s money to buy drugs and alcohol for herself, her friends and her dead-beat boyfriends. His mother has also let numerous cats take control of the house which Karl, in his goal to be more normal, spends many hours trying to clean up. He has five after school jobs, but he has to hide his earnings in different places to keep it safe from his mother. His friends, kids from the school therapy group called “The Madman Underground,” all have stories like Karl’s and have learned to cope in different ways. With odds like these, how will Karl succeed in being normal?

Curriculum tie-ins:

History

John Barnes places the plot in 1973. Why? Could this book be accurate for today? What changes would the author have to make if it did take place today?

Community Relations

What role does AA play in this book? Is there an AA group in your community? What is the history of AA?

Writing

Listen to: <http://yalsa.ala.org/blog/2010/07/06/relive-the-2010-printz-speeches/#more-8793>

During his Printz Honor speech John Barnes states that this book is just a novel. Do you agree with him?

If you loved this, you'll like:

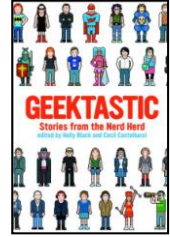
Alexie, Sherman *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. Little, Brown, 2007
Crutcher, Chris. *Ironman*. Greenwillow, 1995.
Going, K.L. *King of the Screwups*. Harcourt, 2009
Herlong, M.H. *The Great Wide Sea*. Viking, 2008
Kluger, Steve. *My Most Excellent Year*. Dial, 2008
Rapp, Adam. *Punkzilla*. Candlewick, 2009

Other books by this author:

Mother of Storms. Tor, 1994.
Directive 51. Ace, 2010.
Daybreak Zero. Ace, 2011.

GEEKTASTIC: STORIES FROM THE NERD HERD

edited by Holly Black & Cecil Castellucci



Genre: Short story, realistic fiction

Themes: Star Trek, Star Wars, cheerleading, geeks, nerds, high school, first love, geeks, nerds, teen angst, generation gap, geeks, nerds...you get the idea!

Author information: Holly Black has been on the book scene since 2002 when her first book, *Tithe: A Modern Faerie Tale*, was published. Since then she has written and contributed to many other popular and critically acclaimed works including the “Spiderwick” series with Tony DiTerlizzi, as well as *Zombies vs. Unicorns* (with Justine Larbalestier, 2010) and the first two books in the “Good Neighbors” series: *White Cat* (2010) and *Red Glove* (2011).

Cecil Castellucci, co-editor and contributor, has contributed to every genre of the printed word and beyond, from graphic novel to opera libretto, performance piece to picture book. Her graphic novels include *The Plain Janes* (2007), *Janes in Love* (2008) and the forthcoming *Odd Duck* (2011). In addition to her contribution to *Geektastic*, she also wrote the YA novels, *Beige* (2007), *The Queen of Cool* (2006), and *Boyproof* (2005).

Plot summary: How to summarize fifteen stories that run the gamut from a Vulcan-Jedi romance to a cautionary tale about meeting up with an on-line soulmate? How to gush enough about the YA luminaries who wrote the stories, from M.T. Anderson to Sara Zarr? How to describe the funny and poignant graphic interludes between the stories? It can’t be done and you’ll have to read this for yourself. There are geeks everywhere in there and you will find your own inner geek, too.

Booktalk: What kind of geek are you? Whether Trek Geek or Cheer Geek or Grade Geek; Drama Geek, Jedi Geek or Freak Geek, you can find yourself in this geekthology and find comfort in knowing the Nerd Herd is alive and well everywhere.

Curriculum tie-ins:

English

Pull a character from a hat and write your own “geektastic” story from that perspective, whether it’s the Lax Bro, the Goth Girl, or the Board Betty.

Art

Using the comic-graphic breaks between the stories for inspiration, create your own cartoon that reflects your world.

World Cultures

Are geeks an American phenomenon? Can you say geek in Greek? Find out about how Japanese geeks (otaku) differ from Russian geeks and what this says about different cultures.

If you loved this, you'll like:

Doctorow, Cory. *Little Brother*. Tor, 2008. (on this year's GMBA list)
Green, John. *An Abundance of Katherines*. Dutton, 2006.
Kluger, Steve. *My Most Excellent Year*. Penguin, 2008.
Lyga, Barry. *Fan Boy & Goth Girl*. HMH, 2006.
Murdock, Catherine Gilbert. *Dairy Queen*. Houghton Mifflin, 2006.
Sonnenblick, Jordan. *Drums, Girls & Dangerous Pie*. Scholastic, 2005.

Other books by this author:

Black, Holly:

Modern Tale of Faerie Series:

Tithe (#1). S & S, 2002.

Valiant (#2). S & S, 2005.

Ironside (#3). S & S, 2007.

Curse Workers Series:

White Cat (#1). S & S, 2010.

Red Glove (#2). S & S, 2011.

Zombies vs. Unicorns. S & S, 2010

Castellucci, Cecil

Plain Janes. DC Comics, 2007.

Janes in Love. DC Comics, 2008.

Boyproof. Scholastic, 2005.

The Queen of Cool. Scholastic, 2006.

Beige. Scholastic, 2007.

Rose Sees Red. Scholastic, 2010.

Additional resources:

<http://www.blackholly.com/>

<http://castellucci.wordpress.com/>

<http://nerdfighters.ning.com/>: We're **Nerdfighters**. We fight against suck....we fight for awesome. We fight using our brains, our hearts, our calculators and our trombones.

<http://youngwritersproject.org/>: The Young Writers Project is an independent Vermont 501(c)3 nonprofit that engages students to write, helps them improve their writing skills and finds audiences for their work. It works with students in grades K-12 in Vermont and the greater Lebanon, N.H., area.

THE BOOK OF LOST THINGS

by John Connolly



Genre: Fantasy

Themes: Loss, loyalty, love, relationships, rites of passage

Author information: John Connolly is an author and freelance journalist for the *Irish Times* newspaper. The son of a public servant (father) and homemaker (mother), John was born in 1968 in Dublin, Ireland. He studied English at Trinity College and journalism at Dublin City University after a series of jobs including being a waiter, a bartender, and a local government official.

Plot summary: Twelve-year-old David, living in London during WWII, loses his mother after a long struggle with illness and is shuffled off to the country to live with his new family. The loss, frustration, and the stress of war take their toll and threaten to shatter David's grip on reality. When he violently enters an alternative world, readers recognize elements of traditional fairy tales, but quickly learn Connolly's creation is not the Disneyfied world of industrious dwarfs and happy trolls. Instead, David finds himself trying to survive in a world more similar to that of the Grimms' original tales. Like their version of Cinderella who, at her wedding, sends doves to pluck out the eyes of her stepsisters, Connolly's fairytale characters and themes are gruesome and violent. Take the journey with David to see if he can escape his entrapment, survive the brutality, and come to terms with loss.

Booktalk: Imagine waking up one day in your stepmother's house to strange noises, only to discover the books on the shelf in your new bedroom are literally talking to you. Each has its own accent and distinct tone and not all of them are particularly friendly. Then imagine you are, one minute at your stepmother's house, and the next, waking up in a world of knights and monsters and wars and beasts. Whether you've gone insane or not becomes a moot point since your sole focus, you discover quickly, needs to be on survival and on finding the elusive king, who just might happen to be your ticket back home.

Curriculum tie-ins:

One Story, Many Tales - Lesson plan - exploring the Cinderella story as a universal archetype.
http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-9-12/One_Story_Many_Tales.aspx

Research the *Brothers Grimm* -the origins of fairy tales - "the moral of the story is..." along with an interactive *Fractured Fairytales* creator.
<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/calendar-activities/jacob-grimm-brothers-grimm-20423.html>

New Takes on Old Tales - rewrite a classic fairytale so it takes place in today's world.
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/activities/10/oldtales.html>

Poetry: Elizabeth Bishop's poem *One Art*
<http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/15212>

If you loved this, you'll like:

Bunce, Elizabeth C. *A Curse Dark as Gold*. Arthur A. Levine, 2008.
Card, Orson Scott. *Enchantment*. Ballantine, 1999.
Harwood, John *The Ghost Writer*. Harcourt, 2004.
Kostova, Elizabeth. *The Historian: a novel*. Little, Brown, 2005.
Pearce, Jackson. *Sisters Red*. Little, Brown, 2010.
Ruiz Zafon, Carlos. *The Angel's Game*. Doubleday, 2009.
Setterfield, Diane. *The Thirteenth Tale*. Atria, 2006.

Other books by this author:

Bad Men. Hodder & Stoughton, 2003.
Nocturnes (short stories and novellas). Atria, 2005.
The Gates. Atria, 2009.

"Charlie Parker" Series:

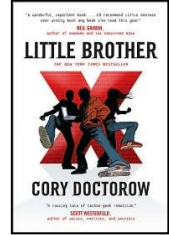
Every Dead Thing. S & S, 1999.
The Killing Kind. Hodder & Stoughton, 2001.
Dark Hollow. S & S, 2002.
and 6 others.

Additional resources:

- Book of Lost Things Website: <http://www.thebookoflostthings.com/> - don't miss the "Behind the Scenes" section where Connolly provides links to fragments and stories, in their original version, that make up David's book world.
- John Connolly's website: <http://www.johnconnollybooks.com/>

LITTLE BROTHER

by Cory Doctorow



Genre: Science fiction

Themes: Terrorism, civil liberties, intellectual freedom, information access, technological enhancements

Author information: Cory Doctorow, born July 17, 1971, is a Canadian blogger, journalist, and science fiction author who practices what he preaches. He is an activist who favors liberalization of copyright laws and free sharing of all digital media.

Plot summary: Seventeen year old Marcus (aka techno-geek “w1n5t0n”) is a supremely savvy hacker maneuvering his way through an ever increasing atmosphere of “big brother is watching you” surveillance. His high school has installed gait-recognition software that enables each person walking down the hall to be identified; phones, computers, library selections, bus passes - all are tracked by the government.

Marcus skips school and is caught by the Department of Homeland Security after a terrorist attack on San Francisco. He is held and subjected to physical and emotional torture - all in the name of security. When he is finally released, Marcus leads a techno-revolution designed to free citizens from the tyranny of “protection” that has taken away most of the freedoms that make our country great.

Booktalk: Big Brother IS watching you. The future is here and George Orwell’s futuristic novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, has come true. How many of our rights are we willing to sign away in the effort to protect our way of life? We have granted our government the freedom to torture, the freedom to censor information, the freedom to hold citizens in captivity without representation. Big Brother is out there and it’s a good thing author Cory Doctorow’s Little Brother (aka Marcus, aka “w1n5t0n”) is out there, too, willing to fight the good fight by leading a techno-revolution against the erosion of civil liberties and intellectual freedoms. Marcus may have thought circumventing the surveillance at his high school was just a game he played well, until he skipped school and was held by the Department of Homeland Security after a terrorist attack in San Francisco. Marcus must answer the questions: How many of the things we love most about this country are we willing to give up to keep ourselves “safe” and how hard are we willing to fight for our rights?

Curriculum tie-ins:

English

Compare to Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

History

Research Abu Ghraib Prison Photos

Research and discuss the Patriot Act and/or airline travel procedures

If you loved this, you'll like:

Orwell, George. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Signet, 1961.

Shusterman, Neil. *Unwind*. S & S, 2007.

Westerfeld, Scott. *Uglies* Trilogy. SimonPulse.

Other books by this author:

Down and Out in the Magic Kingdom. Tor, 2003.

Eastern Standard Tribe. Tor, 2005.

Someone Comes to Town, Someone Leaves Town. Tor, 2006.

Makers. Tor, 2009.

For the Win. Tor, 2010.

Additional resources:

- <http://www.craphound.com>
- <http://www.boingboing.net> Boing boing (blog)

KING OF THE SCREWUPS

by K.L. Going



Genre: Contemporary realistic fiction

Themes: Pleasing parents, being true to yourself, fashion, alternative family, popularity

Author information: K.L. Going worked as an adult literacy tutor, an airline ticket agent, a front desk clerk, a bookstore manager, and as assistant at a Manhattan literary agency before becoming a full-time writer. Born in upstate New York, she has also lived in Maine, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Louisiana. Fun fact: she has “an unsettling obsession with ketchup.”

Plot summary: Liam Geller is athletic, fashion-savvy, and attractive to girls. In short, he’s Mr. Popularity. But when it comes to his dad, and his dad’s definition of success, none of those things qualify. And when Liam tries to live up to his dad’s expectations, he screws up time after time. Until his dad kicks him out. Sent to live with his Aunt Pete, a gay, glam-rocker disc jockey living in a trailer in upstate New York, Liam resolves to put his past behind him and become an unpopular nerd. Except he manages to screw that up, too - or does he?

Booktalk: What do you do if you’re Mr. Popularity with a fashion sense? If your name is Liam Geller, you disappoint and anger your father one too many times and get yourself kicked out of the house. Your gay, glam-rocker, disc jockey uncle’s trailer in Pineville, NY is worlds away from the privilege of Westchester, so it seems like the perfect opportunity to reinvent yourself and become Mr. Un-Popularity. Except even this plan back-fires, sometimes comically. And your “Aunt” Pete sees right through the façade, sees the real you that you’ve been trying to hide. So who are you going to please? Who are you going to be?

Curriculum tie-ins:

Family/Consumer Science

Organize a fashion show.

Calculate the cost of Liam’s wardrobe, to the extent possible.

English

Write the essay you think Liam would write for Orlando.

Music

Put together a compilation of songs Glitter plays, or that you think they would play. Use them as a basis for writing your own disco-style song.

Learn to play several disco classics.

If you loved this, you'll like:

Cameron, Peter. *Some Day This Pain Will Be Useful to You*. FSG, 2007.
Headley, Justina Chen. *North of Beautiful*. Little, Brown, 2009.
Rebeck, Theresa. *Three Girls and Their Brother*. Crown, 2008.
Zadoff, Allen. *Food, Girls and Other Things I Can't Have*. Egmont, 2009.

Other books by this author:

Saint Iggy. Harcourt, 2006.
Fat Kid Rules the World. Speak, 2003 (Printz Honor, 2004)
Writing and Selling the YA Novel. Writer's Digest, 2008.

Additional resources:

- <http://www.klgoing.com/>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rRaePvs0bE> - Glam Slam (glam rock tribute band)
- <http://shakespeare.mit.edu/hamlet/full.html> – Hamlet
- Paris Fashion Week
 - <http://www.modeaparis.com/?lang=en>
 - <http://www.parisfashionshows.net/>
- “Rage,” (2009) a film directed by Sally Potter, offers a different take on the fashion industry.

I KILL GIANTS

by Joe Kelly, Art and Design by Jm Ken Niimura



Genre: Graphic Novel

Themes: Illness, Survival, Bullying, Mental Health, Fantasy, Escapism, Adolescence, Grieving/Coping, Mythology

Author information:

Joe Kelly: Kelly broke into the comics industry in 1995 as the first successful "graduate" of the Stan-hattan Project, a writing workshop conducted as a joint venture between Marvel Comics and New York University's Department of Dramatic Writing. Joe's flair for dialogue and characterization (not to mention his snappy attire and icy blue eyes) captured the attention of Marvel editors. He is a writer of cool stuff, including, but not limited to, comics, animation, film, rambling diatribes, and discreet graffiti. He's a co-founder of [Man of Action](#) studios, co-creator of the smash hit Ben 10, and co-dependent in a wide variety of ways.

Jm Ken Niimura: Niimura, of Spanish and Japanese origin, is a Fine Arts graduate. He has published his works in several books, magazines, and fanzines. He is the winner of more than thirty prizes nationwide.

Plot summary: Barbara Thorson, a girl battling monsters both real and imagined, kicks butt, takes names, and faces her greatest fear in this bittersweet, coming-of-age story.

Booktalk: "To those fighting their own giants, you're stronger than you think..." When faced with the scariest monsters in life (pain, rejection, loss, judgment) it is natural to want to run and hide instead of doing battle, facing the beasts. Inside each of us, no matter how weird, small, weak, messed up, broken, or alone we may feel, exists a power, a mythological force. We hold within us the hammer of justice, the strength that gives us agency in our own world. We are never entirely alone, and we are phenomenally powerful. Barbara Thorson is our deity, and like her, we can survive anything.

Curriculum tie-ins:

English

Extended Metaphors: In *I Kill Giants*, the Giants serve as a metaphor for a larger issue in Barbara's life. Have students write a story with an extended metaphor running throughout.

Social Studies

Study the mythology of giants, having each student choose a culture or specific type of giant. Additionally, have students study the myths of giant fighters.

Health/Life Skills

Anti-Bullying: Have students create a video addressing bullying and how to be an ally and speak out against bullying in their communities.

Grieving Tool Kit: Speak about loss and grief, or coping with an illness or tragedy.
Create a tool kit, a collection of strategies to help someone get through these hard times.

If you loved this, you'll like:

Almond, David. *The Savage*. Candlewick, 2008.
Bechdel, Alison. *Fun Home: a Family Tragicomic*. Mariner, 2007.
Clowes, David. *Ghost World*. Fantagraphics, 2001.
Dahl, Roald. *The BFG*. FSG, 1982
Foer, Jonathan Safran. *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*. HMH, 2005.
Lemire, Jeff. *The Complete Essex County*. Top Shelf Productions, 2009.
O'Malley, Bryan Lee. *Lost at Sea*. 2nd ed. Oni Press, 2005.
Small, David. *Stitches: a Memoir*. W. W. Norton & Company, 2009.
Thompson, Craig. *Blankets*. Top Shelf Productions, 2003.
Wittlinger, Ellen. *Blind Faith*. S & S, 2006.

Other books by this author:

Joe Kelly:

DC Comics

Enginehead #1–6 (2004) with artist Ted McKeever.
Action Comics #760–813
Justice League Elite #1–12 (2004–2005) with artist Doug Mahnke.
Volume 1 (tpb collects #1–4, *Action Comics* #775, *JLA* #100 and *JLA Secret Files* 2004 (lead story), 2005.
Volume 2 (tpb collects #5–12, October 2007.
JLA #61–76, 78–90, 100; collected in 5 volumes (except #83 and #90) as:
Space Ghost #1–6 (2004–2005) with artist Ariel Olivetti.
Green Lantern: Legacy - The Last Will & Testament of Hal Jordan (2004) Graphic novel by artists Brent Anderson and Bill Sienkiewicz.
Superboy #83–93
JLA/Cyberforce (2006) prestige format one-shot with artist Doug Mahnke.
Supergirl #7–19 (2006–2007):
Superman:

- *Godfall* (tpb collects *Action Comics* #812–813, *Adventures of Superman* #625–626 and *Superman* #202–203)
- *Infinite Crisis* (tpb collects *Superman* #226, *Action Comics* #836, *Adventure of Superman* #649)

Superman/Batman Annual #1–2 (2006–2007)

Marvel Comics

2009: *World of Tomorrow* #1–8 (1996–97)
The Amazing Spider-Man #575–576, #595–600, #606–607, #611, #617, #625, #634–637 (2008–2010)

Daredevil #365–375 (1997–1998)

Deadpool #1–33 (1997–1999)

Fantastic Four 2099 #5

Juggernaut #1 (1997) One-shot with artist Duncan Rouleau.

Webspinners: Tales Of Spider-Man #7–9 (1999)

X-Men #70–85

Additional resources:

- Cefrey, Holly. *Coping with Cancer*. Rosen Pub. Group, 2000.
- Ellis, Deborah. *We Want you to Know: Kids Talk about Bullying*. Coteau Books, 2010.
- Knudsen, Shannon. *Giants, Trolls, and Ogres*. Lerner, 2010.
- Lunge-Larsen, Lise. *The Adventures of Thor the Thunder God*. Houghton Mifflin, 2007.
- Walker, Paul Robert. *Giants! Stories from Around the World*. Harcourt, 1995.
- <http://manofaction.tv/> - Man of Action Website, FOUR VISIONS focused through ONE LENS with deadly creative accuracy. With a proven track record in Film, Television, Comics, Online, and Video Games, four of the comic book industry's most innovative professionals have consolidated their considerable talents and resources to form MAN OF ACTION, a Development/ Production House dedicated to writing, conceptualizing, and developing work of exceptional quality, commercial viability, and explosive creativity.
- <http://joevstheuniverse.blogspot.com/> - Joe Kelly's blog.
- <http://www.niimuraweb.com/english/index.htm> - Niimura's website.
- <http://www.stopbullying.gov/>

HOLD STILL **by Nina LaCour**



Genre: Realistic fiction

Themes: Best friends, teen suicide, grief, photography, homosexuality, friendship, romance, San Francisco

Author information: This is Nina LaCour's first book but she is no stranger to the young adult or literary worlds. She has taught literature in a variety of schools, from juvenile hall to college classroom. Nina started the Bay Area YA writing group, Write Teen, and continues to teach English to fortunate high school students.

Plot summary: It's the end of summer and Caitlin must face a return to school following the death of her best friend, Ingrid. We join Caitlin on her journey of grief which is punctuated by excerpts from Ingrid's journal, excerpts that tell Ingrid's story but also frame Caitlin's evolving response to her friend's suicide as she seeks to understand and recover from the trauma.

Booktalk: A found journal, a lost life. Caitlin's life is defined by these two things as she enters her junior year carrying the baggage of her best friend Ingrid's suicide. Her anguish and anger pulse as she tears apart car seats and park benches. But, just as her beloved camera brings objects into focus, so, too, her life begins to take on clarity as she reads through the diary that describes Ingrid's struggle within herself. Caitlin begins to look beyond her lost friend and friendship to the possibilities of love, creativity and survival.

Curriculum tie-ins:

Art/Photography

Hard to resist, given the theme of photography which runs throughout the book. Create a photo montage to tell a seasonal story.

Art/Woodshop

Create your own tree house out of toothpicks or use CAD to draw up a plan for your dream retreat among the leaves.

English

Follow Caitlin's English assignment and find a piece of music that inspires you to write.

If you loved this, you'll like:

Asher, Jay. *Thirteen Reasons Why*. Penguin, 2007.

Forman, Gail. *If I Stay*. Penguin, 2009.

Green, John & David Levithan. *Will Grayson, Will Grayson*. Penguin, 2010.

Levithan, David. *Boy Meets Boy*. Random, 2005.

Moriarty, Jaclyn. *Feeling Sorry for Celia*. St. Martin's Press, 2001.

Picoult, Jodi. *My Sister's Keeper*. S & S, 2004.

Other books by this author:

The Disenchantments. Dutton, 2012.

Additional resources:

Grief:

- <http://www.hospicenet.org/html/teenager.html>
- <http://www.griefspeaks.com/id33.html>

Photography:

- **Teen Ink Cover Photo Contest** - <http://www.teenink.com/Contests/CoverPhotoC.html>
Want to put your friends on the cover of a national magazine? Got some great photos of your friends at home, at school or just hanging out? Send your snapshots now! Every month at least one winning photo is selected to appear on the cover of *Teen Ink* magazine.
- **Azus Web Works** - <http://www.azuswebworks.com/photography/index.html> This site has lots of tips for photographers. Test your camera knowledge with an online quiz, or learn about the history of photography.

Suicide Prevention:

- <http://www.teensuicide.us/>
- <http://aacap.org/page.ww?name=Teen+Suicide§ion=Facts+for+Families>

Tree Houses:

- <http://weburbanist.com/2008/02/10/10-amazing-tree-houses-from-around-the-world-sustainable-unique-and-creative-designs/>
- <http://www.thetreehouseguide.com/>

THE KNIFE OF NEVER LETTING GO

by Patrick Ness



Genre: Adventure, fantasy, dystopian, coming of age

Themes: Conformity, revolution, civil war, aggression

Author information: Patrick Ness was born near Alexandria, Virginia. His father was a drill sergeant in the US Army. As a child he lived in Hawaii and Washington state and then studied English Literature at the University of Southern California. After working as a corporate writer at a cable company, his first story was published in “Genre Magazine” in 1997. He moved to London in 1999 and started working on his first novel. He has lived there ever since.

Plot summary: Todd Hewitt’s foster parents urge him to flee his settlement on the eve of the birthday where it is tradition for the young men to be initiated into manhood in a secret ritual. He is being chased by a mad preacher and the rest of the town on a planet where war with the natives has killed all the women and infected the men with a germ that broadcasts their thoughts aloud for all to hear.

Booktalk: What if you could hear everyone’s thoughts around you (even the animals), and they could hear your thoughts too? What would this sound like? In this world, what if there was a person who could be silent but could still hear your thoughts? How would this make the people of this world feel? Who holds the power - those whose thoughts are out loud or those who are able to remain silent?

Curriculum tie-ins:

Social Studies

One of the themes of this book is conforming to a group. What is the significance of Todd given the opportunity to kill a man who wants to kill him? What are some cases today where conformity is enforced? Can conformity be good? Think about history and when conformity has been used to control a group of people. Why do people follow along when it is against their better judgment individually?

English

Discuss the significance of the title *The Knife of Never Letting Go*. What does the title mean?

Noise and Silence are intertwined and used as themes throughout the book. After reading *The Knife of Never Letting Go* what do you imagine Noise and Silence to look and feel like?

If you loved this, you'll like:

Collins, Suzanne. *The Hunger Games*. Scholastic, 2008.

Doctorow, Cory. *Little Brother*. Tor, 2010. (on this year’s GMBA list)

Shusterman, Neal. *Unwind*. S & S, 2007.

Other books by this author:

Topics About Which I Know Nothing. Harper, 2005.

The Ask and the Answer: Chaos Walking: Book Two. Candlewick, 2009.

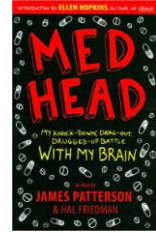
Monsters of Men: Chaos Walking: Book Three. Candlewick, 2010.

Additional resources:

- <http://www.patrickness.com>
- <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Patrick-Ness-Fan-Page>

MED HEAD: MY KNOCK-DOWN, DRAG-OUT, DRUGGED-UP BATTLE WITH MY BRAIN

by James Patterson & Hal Friedman



Genre: Medical nonfiction, biography

Themes: Tourette Syndrome, ADHD, OCD, alcohol abuse, coming of age, self image

Author information: James Patterson retired from advertising in 1985 to pursue writing full time. He is a prolific author of thrillers, romance, and non-fiction. He holds a *Guinness World Record* for most books on the *New York Times*' Hardcover Fiction bestseller's list, with a total of 63! Mr. Patterson received his Bachelor's Degree from Manhattan College, and a Master's from Vanderbilt University. He lives in Palm Beach, Florida with his wife Susan and son Jack.

Plot summary: How does it feel to have a body that won't stop moving, that tics so violently that you tear muscles, that never lets you relax? Even worse, how would it feel if no one understood why it happened or how to make it stop?

Booktalk: When Cory Friedman was five years old he began having uncontrollable urges to twitch his neck. An early mis-diagnosis of ADHD and a prescription for Ritalin quickly escalated these urges and tics. Over the next twelve years Cory visited dozens of doctors and was placed on 50-60 different medications in an attempt to control his Tourette Syndrome. Despite, or perhaps partly because of, the many treatments Cory went through, his symptoms escalated into increasingly dangerous compulsions, leaving him a lonely prisoner inside his own body. (*Med Head* was also published for adults as *Against Medical Advice*).

Curriculum tie-ins:

Science/Health

What is Tourette Syndrome? ADHD? OCD? *Med Head* is a great introduction to these commonly misunderstood disorders. Discuss the reality of the disorders, as opposed to the representation portrayed in popular culture. This can also be tied into a Biology unit on the nervous system and neurotransmitters.

Current Events

American schools are dealing with a bullying epidemic. In *Med Head*, Cory had to deal with both students and adults who did not understand his condition, or the fact that his actions were beyond his control. Initiate a discussion or writing response based on his experiences and parallels within your own school. Have the students ever been punished or teased for something they couldn't control?

If you loved this, you'll like:

Cohen, Brad & Lisa Wysocky. *Front of the Class: How Tourette Syndrome Made Me the Teacher I Never Had*. St. Martin's Griffin, 2008.

Friesen, Jonathan. *Jerk, California*. Speak, 2008.

Murray, Jaye. *Bottled Up*. Speak, 2004.
Seligman, Adam Ward & John S. Hilkevich (editors). *Don't Think About Monkeys*. Hope Pr, 1992.
Sheff, David. *Beautiful Boy: A Father's Journey Through His Son's Addiction*. Mariner Books, 2009.

Other books by this author:

Maximum Ride Series:

The Angel Experiment. Little, Brown, 2005.
School's Out- Forever. Little, Brown, 2006.
Saving the World: and Other Extreme Sports. Little, Brown, 2007.
The Final Warning. Little, Brown, 2008.
Max. Little, Brown, 2009.
Fang. Little, Brown, 2010.
Angel. Little, Brown, 2011.

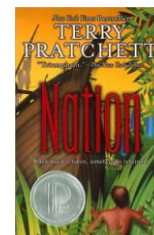
Witch and Wizard Series:

Witch and Wizard. Little, Brown, 2009.
The Gift. Little, Brown, 2010.
The Fire. Little, Brown, Not Yet Published.

Additional resources:

- <http://www.jamespatterson.com/> James Patterson's website.
- http://www.jamespatterson.com/books_medHead.php The *Med Head* web page.
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4I6IL6mQ8qE> James Patterson and Hal Friedman talk about the process of writing *Against Medical Advice* (the alternate title of *Med Head*)
- <http://www.tsa-usa.org/> National Tourette Syndrome Association.

NATION by Terry Pratchett



Genre: Historical fiction, alternate history, fantasy

Themes: Survival, friendship, beliefs, coming of age

Author information: Terry Pratchett was born in Buckinghamshire England. A self-proclaimed “non-descript student,” Pratchett credits his education to the Beaconsfield Public Library. His first short story was published commercially when he was only 15. The first novel in his popular *Discworld* series was published in 1983. Since that time he has sold more than 65 million books in 37 languages. In 2009 Terry Pratchett received a knighthood for services in literature.

Plot summary: After a devastating tsunami destroys all that they have ever known, Mau, an island boy, and Daphne, an aristocratic English girl, together with a small band of refugees, set about rebuilding their community and all the things that are important in their lives.

Booktalk: An Island boy, Mau, is making an important voyage to officially leave boyhood behind and become a man. Aristocratic Ermintrude (“Daphne”) is also on a voyage, traveling aboard the *Sweet Judy* to join her Father. When a tsunami shipwrecks Daphne and destroys Mau’s island village, the two must join together to survive. As they struggle to overcome differences in language, life experiences, and beliefs, they slowly build a new life for themselves and other refugees that begin to arrive from surrounding islands. A hidden secret from the Nation’s past and the arrival of mutineers from the *Sweet Judy* threaten to destroy the fledgling community.

Curriculum tie-ins:

History/Ancient Cultures:

In *Nation*, we learn that Mau’s ancestors had discovered astronomy long before the Europeans. This is a good starting place to introduce students to the “modern” science and mathematics that were first discovered by ancient civilizations.

If you loved this, you’ll like:

Bacigalupi, Paolo. *Ship Breaker*. Little, Brown, 2010.

Defoe, Daniel. *Robinson Crusoe*. Collector’s Library, 2011 (originally published 1719).

Gaiman, Neil. *American Gods*. Morrow, 2001.

Goldman, William. *The Princess Bride*. Harcourt, 2007 (originally published 1973).

McCaffrey, Anne. *All the Weyrs of Pern*. Del Rey, 1991.

O’Dell, Scott. *Island of the Blue Dolphins*. HMH, 2010 (originally published 1960).

Willis, Connie. *To Say Nothing of the Dog*. Bantam Spectra, 1997.

Other books by this author:

The Discworld Series, 39 books including:

The Colour of Magic. HarperCollins, 1983.
Small Gods. HarperCollins, 1992.
The Wee Free Men. HarperCollins, 2003.
Snuff. Harper, Not Yet Published.

Johnny Maxwell Series:

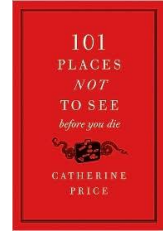
Only You Can Save Mankind. HarperCollins, 1992.
Johnny and the Dead. HarperCollins, 1993.
Johnny and the Bomb. HarperCollins, 1996.

Additional resources:

- <http://www.terrypratchettbooks.com/> Terry Pratchett's website.
- <http://www.terrypratchettbooks.com/books/nation-letter.html> A Terry Pratchett letter about the writing of *Nation*.
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wqxc4H6UX5U> A video of Terry Pratchett talking about *Nation*.

101 PLACES NOT TO SEE BEFORE YOU DIE

by Catherine Price



Genre: Non-fiction

Themes: Travel, Science, Culture, Diversity, Humor, Sex, Geography, Journalism

Author information: Price's written and multimedia work has appeared in publications including *The Best American Science Writing*, *The New York Times*, *Popular Science*, *O, The Oprah Magazine*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *The Washington Post Magazine*, *Salon*, *Slate*, *Men's Journal*, *Mother Jones*, *Health Magazine*, and *Outside*, among others. A graduate of Yale and UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism, she's a contributing editor at *Popular Science*. She's also a recipient of the Middlebury Fellowship in Environmental Reporting, a winner of the Gobind Behari Lal prize for science writing and has contributed several commentaries to American Public Media's Marketplace. In addition to actual reporting work — and keeping a blog about Type 1 Diabetes on A Sweet Life — she specializes in experiences that are uncomfortable in the moment but amusing afterwards, including (but certainly not limited to) teaching Latin and math at an all-boys middle school, taking trapeze and improv comedy classes, teaching hip hop aerobics in Beijing, paragliding in South Africa, biking across the United States, traveling halfway across the Pacific by sailboat, driving a formula 1 race car, and leading ice-skating classes for five-year-olds.

Plot summary: Catherine Price, journalist, editor, blogger, takes us around the world on the worst trip of our lives. She guides us comically to 101 of the worst, lamest, grossest, scariest, least safe places to visit while traveling. Through her journalistic eye we see the familiar in a new light: what's really all that exciting about standing at the place where four states meet at right angles? We are introduced to the gross so vividly, dry heaving at the mention of a pink lagoon full of pig feces and afterbirth. We giggle and snicker talking about phallic rocks and cities named after four-letter words. With personal anecdotes of her own travels, pictures that illustrate the anti-greatness, and guest entries from a bevy of writers, Price takes us on a trip we'll never want to remember, but will find hard to forget.

Booktalk: Passport, check. Sunglasses, check. Awesome visor, check. Brand-new high top white sneakers, check. Fanny pack, check. Camera, check. Back-up camera, check. Back-up back-up camera, check. Everything a touristy world traveler needs. Now, turn around, go back into your home, lock the door and avoid the 101 places listed in this book like they have the plague (some of them actually might...).

Curriculum tie-ins:

English/Social Studies

Travel Journals...have students keep a journal of their travels. These could be reflective pieces, looking back on childhood excursions, or hopeful wishes for future wanderings. They could include images, artifacts in a scrap-book fashion, adding depth to their portrayal of these places.

Ongoing Epilogue...Have students go to the official book website,

www.101worstplaces.com. Here, they can contribute their own travel horror stories or fictionalized accounts.

Geography

Map of the Worst...using a giant world map, have students locate each of the 101 places, using a pin to mark its location. Find images that represent each locale and place these on the perimeter of the map, connecting the image to the pin with yarn.

Science

Many of the pieces in this book have a science tie-in. Have students find information about the “pig lagoon.” (This American Life, the tv show, did a segment about visiting an industrial pig farm; it really helps the grossness come to life.) They could create a presentation on the pollutants and bacteria found in the lagoon. There are many other bacteria-infested locales to explore scientifically as well.

If you loved this, you'll like:

Almond, Steve. *Candyfreak: a Journey through the Chocolate Underbelly of America*. Harvest Books, 2005.

Brooks, Max. *The Zombie Survival Guide: Complete Protection from the Living Dead*. Three Rivers Press, 2003.

Foer, Jonathan Safran. *Everything is Illuminated*. HMH, 2002.

Juddery, Mark. *Overrated: the 50 Most Over-Hyped Things in History*. Perigee Trade, 2010.

Lander, Christian. *Stuff White People Like: A Definitive Guide to the Unique Taste of Millions*. Random House, 2008.

Levitt, Steven and Stephen Dubner. *Freakonomics: a Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything*. William Morrow, 2006.

The Onion. *Our Dumb World: The Onion's Atlas of the Planet Earth, 73rd Edition*. Little Brown, 2007.

Sedaris, David. *Me Talk Pretty One Day*. Back Bay Books, 2001.

Stewart, Jon, ed., et al. *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart Presents Earth (The Book): a Visitor's Guide to the Human Race*. Grand Central Publishing, 2010.

Warren Frank. *PostSecret: Extraordinary Confessions from Ordinary Lives*. William Morrow, 2005.

Other books by this author:

Price, Catherine et al. *The Big Sur Bakery Cookbook*. HarperCollins, 2009

Angier, Natalie, ed. *The Best American Science Writing*. Ecco, 2009. (Featured Writer)

Additional resources:

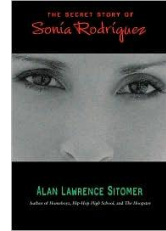
- <http://www.101worstplaces.com/> - Official Book Website and its accompanying app, 101 Worst Places, aims to be an ongoing epilogue for the book itself -- and they want to hear your stories. Use this section to contribute your own suggestions for places and experiences -- real, hypothetical, historical, contextual -- that remind us that it's okay to

stray from the beaten tourist track, and celebrate the idea that sometimes the worst experiences in the moment make the best stories afterwards.

- <https://www.facebook.com/pages/101-Places-Not-To-See-Before-You-Die/102647109497> - Facebook Page for the Book
- <http://catherine-price.com/> - Price's Website
- <http://www.pretirement.net/> - Price's travel blog
- <http://asweetlife.org/> - Price's blog about Type 1 Diabetes

THE SECRET STORY OF SONIA RODRIGUEZ

by Alan Lawrence Sitomer



Genre: Realistic fiction

Themes: Racial and cultural stereotypes and differences, immigrant experiences, family relationships, gender bias

Author information: Alan Sitomer is an award-winning inner city English high school teacher specializing in engaging reluctant readers. He received California's 2007 Teacher of the Year prize and has been the recipient of the 2007 Educator of the Year and 2008 Innovative Educator of the Year awards. Sitomer is a strong proponent of project-based learning and travels extensively to speak with students and present teacher workshops.

Plot summary: Sonia Rodriguez is the oldest daughter in a Latina family of seven living in the United States. She is a legal citizen; her father is not. Her struggle to rise above the poverty and entrenched negativity of her family relationships drives the story. Sonia's father has pride and hope in his eldest daughter but must work three jobs as an illegal to support his family. Her mother uses Sonia as a servant while she stays in bed watching *telenovelas* and turns a blind eye to Sonia's attempts to escape the sexual advances of her *drunkle* (drunken uncle). Her quest to steer her way through the complicated maze of homework, cooking, cleaning, shopping, and childcare while loving and hating her culture allows us to appreciate Sonia's desire to make a better life for herself.

Booktalk: Every high school student has a hard life. But sixteen-year-old Sonia Rodriguez has to clean her drunkle's (drunken uncle's) vomit off the floor and wash his urine soaked clothes before she can get to school in the morning. In the afternoons, after cooking, cleaning, taking care of her mother's newborn twins, and doing errands (buying beer and soft toilet paper for her uncle) she tries to find time to do her homework – all while staying on guard against her drunkle's sexual advances. Sonia's mother stays in bed watching Latin soap operas, treats Sonia as a servant, and denies her brother's abuse. Her father, an illegal immigrant, has great hope for his daughter but must work three jobs to support his family. Sonia loves and hates her Mexican heritage and must somehow find a way to change her world enough to survive and live a better life.

Curriculum tie-ins:

English classes/history classes could prepare digital book reports (see Alan Sitomer's website) on issues dealing with the immigrant experience, cultural heritage, racial stereotypes.

If you loved this, you'll like:

Johnson, Angela. *The First Part Last*. S & S, 2003.
van Diepen, Allison. *Snitch*. SimonPulse, 2007.
Voorhees, Coert. *The Brothers Torres*. Hyperion, 2009.
Williams-Garcia, Rita. *Jumped*. Amistad, 2009.

Other books by this author:

The Hoopster. Hyperion, 2005.

Hip Hop High School. Jump at the Sun, 2006.

Homeboyz. Jump at the Sun, 2007. 2008 ALA Top Ten Book of the Year

Hip Hop Poetry & The Classics. Milk Mug, 2004.

Teaching Teens and Reaping the Results. Scholastic Teaching, 2009.

Nerd Girls. Hyperion, Not yet released.

Additional resources:

Author website: www.alanlawrencesitomer.com

MARCELO IN THE REAL WORLD

by Francisco X. Stork



Genre: Realistic fiction

Themes: Sense of belonging, family relationships, ethical dilemmas, doing the right thing, friendship, autism and Asperger's syndrome, cognitive disorders, introduction to "real world" conflicts, religion and spirituality, sexual attraction, status.

Author information: Francisco X. Stork was born in Monterrey, Mexico, and moved to the United States when he was nine. He works as an attorney for an affordable-housing agency in Massachusetts and lives near Boston with his wife. Despite the settings of *The Way of the Jaguar* and *Behind the Eyes*, he has never been in prison other than as a visitor. Mr. Stork's interests: "Reading in order to know about what I write, to write better, for inspiration (spiritual and literary) and for the sheer joy of it. Writing first drafts as they come. Rewriting and revising and rewriting and shaping and making the parts fit the whole, and rewriting again, later. Teaching and working with young people."

Plot summary: The summer before Marcelo's senior year of high school is approaching and he is looking forward to working at the stables and then attending his final year at Paterson, a school for children with special needs. Yet Arturo, his father, wants Marcelo away from this protected environment and to attend "regular" high school in the fall. He also wants Marcelo to work at his law firm for the summer instead of with the Haflinger ponies at Paterson. For a young man with Asperger's syndrome, albeit very high-functioning, this is a huge deviation from his safe and familiar world. Marcelo's summer at the law firm introduces him to much more than just his first job in the "real world." His own ethics are tested as he stumbles upon a disturbing photograph and decides to solve the mystery of its origin.

Booktalk: "Cognitive disorder is not an accurate description of what happens inside Marcelo's head" (p.55) "... 'Cognitive disorder' implies that there is something wrong with the way I think or with the way I perceive reality. I perceive just fine. Sometimes I perceive more of reality than others." (p.54)

"Father is wrong. Because Marcelo perceives so much reality is why Marcelo should be allowed to stay at Paterson and work with the Halfinger ponies this summer. Father is just wrong. Paterson is where Marcelo belongs."

Marcelo does not want to work in the "real world." Marcelo wants to sleep in his tree house and walk Namu. Marcelo will respect Father's wishes even though he knows he is wrong. Marcelo knows that everything in his life is about to change."

Curriculum tie-ins:

Creative writing

Marcelo often refers to himself (and others) in the 3rd person. Write a short story about

something that happened to you using the 3rd person point-of-view. Did you find this difficult to do? How does it change the flow and ease of your writing?

Religion

Marcelo was brought up Catholic, yet meets with a Rabbi to discuss his religious beliefs. He also studies Buddhist writings. Why do you think Marcelo studies and follows these 3 different religions? Discuss why Aurora, despite her own lapsed faith, still feels it is important for her son to meet with Rabbi Heschel.

Music

Music, especially classical music, is immensely important to Marcelo. Music CDs are the items he covets the most. He hears music even when there is none playing. This mental or internal music (IM) is not heard through the ears, but rather seems to come from the brain and helps Marcelo stay focused and calm. The music that works for him includes pieces like Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" or "Largo" from Piano Concerto No.3- what would your IM playlist be? Choose 15 tracks that inspire, calm or help you through life's difficult times. Explain what it is about these songs that made you choose them.

Ethics

For many reasons, Marcelo is a very honest young man who almost always tells the truth and does the right thing. His summer at the law firm puts him in a position that tests the boundaries of his convictions.

Did Marcelo do the right thing? Should Marcelo have remained loyal to his father? Should lawyers have the right to do whatever the law allows regardless of whether it is ethical or not?

Weigh your feelings about Marcelo's decision against these quotes from Arturo:

"But we were doing what the law allowed us to do." (p.288)

"The world is not all black and white. There are rules you know nothing about. Rules I need to follow in order to survive..." (p.289)

Find other examples from the book and debate the topic.

If you loved this, you'll like:

Haddon, Mark. *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. Doubleday, 2003.

Mitchell, David. *Black Swan Green*. Random, 2006.

Robison, John Elder. *Look Me in the Eye: My Life with Asperger's*. Crown, 2007.

Tammet, Daniel. *Born On A Blue Day: Inside the Extraordinary Mind of an Autistic Savant*. Free Press, 2006.

Other books by this author:

The Way of the Jaguar. Bilingual Press/Editorial Biling-Ue, 2000.

Behind the Eyes. Dutton, 2006.

The Last Summer of the Death Warriors. Arthur A. Levine Books, 2010.

Additional resources:

- Author website: <http://www.franciscostork.com/>
- Francisco's blog: <http://www.franciscostork.com/blog/>
- Interview with the author:
 - <http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/video.jsp?pID=1640183585&bcpid=1640183585&bclid=16676128001&bctid=15228834001>
- Scholastic's *Marcelo in the Real World* discussion questions:
 - <http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/collateral.jsp?id=39027>
- *Marcelo* section of editor Cheryl Klein's blog:
<http://chavelaque.blogspot.com/2009/04/behind-book-marcelo-in-real-world.html>
- Asperger's Resources:
 - Asperger's Disorder Homepage: <http://www.aspergers.com/>
 - Asperger's Syndrome Information: <http://www.aspergersresource.org/>
 - Autism Society: <http://www.autism-society.org/>
- Temple Grandin, PhD, is a Professor at Colorado State University and the most accomplished and well-known adult with autism in the world. She is also a professional designer of humane livestock facilities.
 - <http://www.templegrandin.com/>
 - Grandin, Temple. *The Way I See It: A Personal Look at Autism and Asperger's*. Future Horizons, 2008.
 - Grandin, Temple & Catherine Johnson. *Animals Make Us Human: Creating the Best Life for Animals*. HMH, 2009.
 - An HBO movie was made of her life. *Temple Grandin*. HBO, 2010.

MONSTRUMOLOGIST

by Rick Yancey



Genre: Horror, suspense

Themes: Death, family, monsters, science

Author information: Rick Yancey is developing a series which began with *The Monstrumologist*, continued with *The Curse of the Wendigo* and will be followed in September 2011 with *The Isle of Blood*. He has also written the award-winning series *Extraordinary Adventures of Alfred Kropp*, as well as several novels for adults including *The Highly Effective Detective* and *A Burning in Homeland*. His memoir, *Confessions of a Tax Collector*, was named by the *Wall Street Journal* as one of the five best books on taxes ever written. He earned a BA in English from Roosevelt University in Chicago, and worked as a field officer for the Internal Revenue Service before turning to writing full time in 2004. Rick lives in Florida with his wife Sandy and two sons.

Plot summary: Will Henry is the orphan apprentice of a doctor with an unusual specialty: monstrumology, the study of monsters. When a midnight visitor brings them the body of a young girl entwined with the corpse of an Anthropophagus, it is the start of the most mysterious case of Will Henry's life. Anthropophagi are headless monsters whose razor-sharp teeth are in their stomachs—and they are supposed to be extinct in this part of the world. Now Will and the monstrumologist are in a race against time to put a stop to the plague of monsters before they kill again.

Booktalk: “Step lively, Will Henry, and snap to!” And so we meet Will Henry, orphan, and his guardian, infamous monster hunter Dr. Pellinore Warthrop. What do you do when you are woken in the middle of the night by a panicked grave robber bringing you the monster's body he found in a young girl's grave? Dissect it, of course! That is just what Will and the doctor do upon the discovery of the headless, man-eating Anthropophagus. The two must hunt down and kill the rest of the terrifying tribe of monsters, as well as solve the mystery of where they came from, placate the authorities, and keep the deaths to a minimum. Book one in the series is exciting, horrifying, and suspenseful, and is sure to keep you anxiously turning pages until the very end.

Curriculum tie-ins:

Art

Draw and share your impressions of the anthropophagi. Compare these to illustrations and paintings of other legendary monsters.

English

The Monstrumologist is written solely from Will's perspective, and we learn about his childhood, family, and other facets of his life. Dr. Warthrop is a much more mysterious character, and we only learn a little about what might be motivating him. Write a diary entry from Warthrop's perspective, or rewrite a scene from the book from his point of view. Why does he treat Will Henry so harshly? Do you think he cares about Will?

History

The Monstrumologist takes place in New England in 1888. Research how people lived at the time. What were the social customs? What clothes did they wear? What kinds of opportunities would have been available to an orphan like Will Henry? Besides the supernatural elements, what about the book is realistic? Unrealistic? How well do you think the author researched the time period before writing?

If you loved this, you'll like:

Horowitz, Anthony. *Raven's Gate*. Scholastic, 2008.
King, Stephen. *Just After Sunset*. Pocket, 2009.
McBride, Lish. *Hold Me Closer, Necromancer*. First Edition, 2010.
Nix, Garth. *Sabriel*. HarperTeen, 2008.
Shan, Darren. The *Cirque du Freak* series. Little, Brown.
Wooding, Chris. *The Haunting of Alaiabel Cray*. Point, 2005.
Yovanoff, Brenna. *The Replacement*. Razorbill, 2010.

Other books by this author:

The Curse of the Wendigo (Monstrumologist). S & S, 2010.
The Isle of Blood (Monstrumologist). S & S, September 2011.
The Extraordinary Adventures of Alfred Kropp. Bloomsbury, 2008.
Alfred Kropp: The Seal of Solomon. Bloomsbury, 2008.
Alfred Kropp: The Thirteenth Skull. Bloomsbury, 2009.

Additional resources:

- <http://www.dreadcentral.com/news/41214/exclusive-rick-yancey-talks-monstrumologist-curse-wendigo-and-more>
- <http://www.rickyancey.com/monstrumologist/about.php>
- http://www.rickyancey.com/monstrumologist/files/monstrumologist_reading_guide.pdf

Green Mountain Book Award

Checklist, 2011-2012

Check the boxes as you read the books. You **MUST** read at least three titles on this list to vote.

☐ Anderson, Laurie Halse

☐ Barnes, John

☐ Black, Holly & Cecil Castellucci

☐ Connolly, John

☐ Doctorow, Cory

☐ Going, K.L.

☐ Kelly, Joe

☐ LaCour, Nina

☐ Ness, Patrick

☐ Patterson, James & Hal
Friedman

☐ Pratchett, Terry

☐ Price, Catherine

☐ Sitomer, Alan Lawrence

☐ Stork, Francisco X.

☐ Yancey, Rick

Wintergirls

Tales of the Madman Underground

Geektastic: Stories from the Nerd Herd

The Book of Lost Things

Little Brother

King of the Screwups

I Kill Giants

Hold Still

The Knife of Never Letting Go

Med Head: My Knock-down, Drag-out, Drugged-up
Battle With My Brain

Nation

101 Places Not to See Before You Die

The Secret Story of Sonia Rodriguez

Marcelo in the Real World

Monstrumologist